

DOE Supplemental Guidance on Crediting Directly-Related Service for Annual Leave (August 2007)

One of the provisions of the Federal Workforce Flexibilities Act of 2004 (PL 108-411) provided for crediting military, previous Federal, and non-Federal service for newly appointed or reappointed employees if the employee's experience is directly related to the position for which selected. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued implementing regulations (*Federal Register* Vol.71 No. 180 dated September 18, 2006), which are available at <http://www.opm.gov/fedregis/#71-091806-54570-a>, and guidance, which is available at http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2005/2005-07_QA.asp. The OPM supplemental information to the regulations and the guidance clarify that credit must be approved prior to an employee's entrance on duty (EOD) date. The following is Departmental guidance on the discretionary issues that are left up to agencies to determine.

1. The determination as to whether or not crediting the experience is "necessary to achieve an important agency mission or performance goal." The following questions should be addressed in making this determination.

- a. **Acceptance.** If the prospective employee is not offered this benefit, is the candidate likely to accept the position any way?
- b. **Impact on Organization.** If the prospective employee declines the position because s/he wasn't offered this benefit, what is the impact on the organization; i.e., would the organization, with reasonable time and effort, be able to find another well-qualified candidate?

If the answer to either or both of these questions is "yes," then it would be inappropriate to offer the benefit. If the answer is "no" to both questions, then it would be appropriate to recommend approval or approve it if all other conditions are met.

2. The amount of service credit that may be granted. Time for directly-related experience is to be credited using calendar days without any deduction for non-workdays consistent with the way credit is given for determining leave based on service computation dates (SCD). If full credit is not warranted, an explanation must be provided, e.g., an organization is matching a selectee's existing leave/vacation benefit, the minimum that is acceptable to the selectee is less than full credit, or credit is consistent with other selectees' credits.

- a. **Military service.** When military service is creditable fully towards an employee's SCD for leave purposes, it is not necessary to determine what portion is directly-related experience. However, for retired military, only applicable service for certain campaigns or expedition is creditable for determining an

employee's SCD for leave purposes, so a separate determination must be made to determine the directly-related experience portion of service.

- b. Previous Federal and non-Federal service.** A separate determination must be made as to what time period(s) is creditable. This may result in crediting only a portion of the total time at a particular company or portion of a job described in a resume.

3. What constitutes acceptable written documentation of qualifying service.

- a. SF-144A.** OPM requires that the SF-144A or an equivalent form be used to document the time that is credited. Attached is a fillable SF-144A in Word that may be used until OPM makes the form available on its web site. As an alternative, the Department of Army's updated service computation date (SCD) calculator, which is available at <http://www.chra.army.mil/SMD/>, may be used as an equivalent form (the calculator will capture service time creditable for determining SCDs for all purposes, not just annual leave; see the attached instruction sheet to download and use the SCD calculator). Because creditable service must be determined prior to an employee's EOD, the calculators in CHRIS cannot be used because they are not available until after an employee's EOD when a record is entered.

- b. Other documentation.** The following additional information should be included in the file to ensure that the determination can be fully reconstructed:

- 1) a written justification from a subject matter expert or supervisor that
 - a) addresses the questions in paragraph 1 above, and
 - b) describes the specific competencies required of the position and how the selectee's experience is directly related to them;
- 2) a copy of the position description for the position being filled;
- 3) a copy of the applicant's resume and job analysis questionnaire;
- 4) if obtainable, a copy of the selectee's applicable position description and/or performance plan that describes the directly-related experience; if not obtainable, then a self-certified statement that describes the experience; and
- 5) any other supporting documentation.

Procedures for selectees to submit the written documentation. If the answer to both of the questions in paragraph 1 is "no," then offer letters may include a statement that credit may be given for directly-related experience and describe the supporting documentation required and the time frame or date in which the documentation must be provided.

- 4. Vacancy Announcements.** When the decision to offer annual leave credit is made prior to issuing a vacancy announcement, e.g., for hard to fill positions or in connection with Career Patterns, it may be appropriate to include a statement on the vacancy announcement such as the following:

The candidate selected for this position may be credited with directly-related experience for annual leave purposes if eligible and considered appropriate.

Attachments:

1. SF-144A
2. Instruction sheet on the SCD calculator